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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000360

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SUBJECT: MOI ATMAR TAKES ACTION AGAINST CORRUPT OFFICIALS

Classified By: DCM Christopher W. Dell for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (U) Summary. In a recent meeting of the International Police Coordination Board, Minister of Interior Atmar told the International Community that they should expect to see action against corrupt MOI and Afghan National Police officials over the next few days. Over the past week, Atmar followed through on his promise by removing four senior Kabul-based police officials and three provincial police commanders from their positions of authority. None of these officials will actually be unemployed as a result of their corrupt activities, but will instead be placed in marginal government positions. Minister Atmar has threatened to prosecute any current or former police officials who he can prove committed crimes. End summary.

¶2. (U) During the January 31 meeting of the International Police Coordination Board (IPCB), Minister of Interior Atmar told high-level officials from the International Community (IC) that he would soon be taking action against a number of corrupt senior police and MOI officials. He told attendees that when he first took over MOI in October, he did not want to be perceived as the &new guy cleaning house and bringing in his own cronies. Instead, he told his subordinates that he would wait 90 days to gather information on corrupt activities and then decide what to do. Those 90 days were up in early January.

¶3. (U) On February 4, the MOI announced that it was naming new officials to four senior positions in Kabul and three more as provincial police commanders. The new officials are: 1) LtG Abdul Rahman as Kabul Police Commander (Zone 101), 2) BG Khalil Dastyar as Deputy Kabul Police Commander, 3) BG Abdul Ghafar as Chief of the Kabul Criminal Investigation Department, 4) BG Mohammad Asif &Jabar Khil8 as Police Commander of the Kabul International Airport, 5) BG Baqi Noristani as Police Commander of Ghor Province, 6) BG Abdurahman Sarjang as Police Commander of Zabul, and 7) BG Saeed Ahmad Samee as Police Commander of Badghis. In a press release, MOI said it &gives thanks for the services provided by8 the four departing Kabul officials, outgoing Kabul Police Commander LtG Mohammad Ayoub Salangi, Deputy Commander BG Ali sha Ahmadzai, CID Chief BG Ali shah Paktiawal, and KIA Commander BG Haq Nawaz Haq yar.

¶4. (C) While we have little background on the new Kabul Chief and his Deputy, PRT Jalalabad reports that the new CID Chief Ghafar comes well recommended after his stint as Nangarhar Provincial Police Chief. Apparently Nangarhar Governor Sherzai opposed his transfer, and Ghafar himself was concerned about the challenges he would face related to corruption and organized crime in the capital city. New Badghis Police Commander Samee is an Uzbek who has held various police posts in the north and was recently Humans

Rights Director at MOI. PRT Qal-e Naw was pleased to hear of the departure of Badghis Police Commander General Ayub Niazyar, and believe that a well-respected Colonel Wahid (who was known as one of the most competent ANP in the province in a previous assignment) will be the new Deputy Commander. Departed Kabul CID Chief Paktiawal was well-known in the capital for often being the first one on the scene of an insurgent attack. Some surmised that was because he often knew about them in advance.

15. (C) In other police corruption news, the Jani Khel District Police Commander was removed on corruption charges by Paktia Provincial Police Commander Wardak earlier this month. While the District Commander was not well thought of, his district had just returned from Focused District Development (FDD) training, participating in Cycle 5. Reportedly the district has suffered from poor leadership as well as understaffing. Worse still, Zabul Provincial Police Commander BG Mohammad Yaqub is being investigated on treason charges. MOI investigators accuse him of stealing weapons and money and reportedly referred him to the Military Prosecution Department. General Yaqub spent most of his career as a military officer before recently moving to a police position. MOI has yet to release an official statement on the case, but treason charges would suggest that Yaqub was smuggling goods to as yet unidentified enemies of the state.

COMMENT

KABUL 00000360 002 OF 002

16. (C) None of those who have been removed will be unemployed, at least for the moment. Atmar announced to attendees at the IPCB Board Meeting that he would prosecute any of those who could be proven to have committed crimes but lamented that he did not have sufficient evidence for prosecution at this time. It is interesting to note that despite Karzai's commitment to give Atmar free reign at MOI, the President still had to approve his recommendations.
WOOD